

Farm-to-School is an integrated program developing in schools across the country to teach kids about the cycles of life from seed to table. Through Farm-to-School, the lunch program brings fresh local produce into schools, teaching kids to make their own healthy eating choices, and giving them the opportunity to try new foods. Children develop a link to local agriculture and learn how farms contribute to the community, the environment and the food they eat.

Project goals:

- with new local markets. As children experience the flavor of local fresh fruits and vegetables in their school meals, they will be more likely to influence their families in purchasing from local farmers' markets or other direct marketing outlets.
- Nutrition and Agricultural Education: Children "learn by doing" when they get to select nutritious and delicious fruits, vegetables, nuts, and other farm produce in their school cafeterias. Classroom and garden instruction can further their understanding of the need to make healthy choices while also teaching about the importance of local agriculture.

Components of a Farm-To-School program:

- Salad Bars offer farm-fresh food in school lunches, so children can make healthy choices at a time when they are developing life-long eating patterns.
- School Gardens provide hands-on experiences with the natural world in outdoor classrooms.
- Composting and Recycling help develop an understanding of environmental stewardship responsibilities.
- Nutrition Education and Cooking Classes help students understand the connections between growing and preparing food, balanced eating and their own good health.
- Farm Visits encourage children to develop a connection with the land, an understanding of food and farming systems and an appreciation of the people who grow their food.
- Family Involvement ensures that the healthy habits taught at school are reinforced at home.

CAFF's Farm-to-School activities:

- Work with school food services staff, farmers, distributors, children, parents, teachers, and other collaborators to develop Farm-to-School projects in regions where we work.
- Help farmers and school food services resolve distribution problems associated with institutional direct buying.
- Organize farm visits for schools developing Farm-to-School programs.
- Provide in-class agriculture and garden-enhanced nutrition education for students of all ages.

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Mission Statement

Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) is building a movement of rural and urban people to foster family-scale agriculture that cares for the land, sustains local economies and promotes social justice.

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